submit inventory. These types of vendors are classified as search time participants, order time participants or real time participants, based primarily upon the manner and time in which inventory information is transferred from the particular vendor to the exchange platform. Inventory information from a search time participant would be transmitted to the exchange platform at a first interval of time. The inventory information generated by the order time participant would be transmitted to the exchange platform at a second interval of time, greater than the first interval of time. Vendors denoted as real time participants would transmit the inventory information to the exchange platform in real time, which would be greater than the second interval of time.

The patent to <u>Erickson</u> discloses a centrally coordinated communication system for facilitating communication between a plurality of buyers and a plurality of suppliers. As shown in Figure 1, a service provider 14 is included for receiving and transmitting information from a plurality of buyers 10 and a plurality of suppliers 12. However this reference does not anticipate or suggest a system or method in which inventory information is transmitted from the suppliers to the service provider at different intervals. As can be appreciated, the more frequent that inventory information is transmitted from the supplier to the service provider would increase the cost to each respective supplier. Therefore, based upon economic considerations, a particular supplier or vendor would have the option of relaying inventory information to the service provider or exchange platform at differing rates and thereby at differing costs to the supplier or vendor.

It is clear that the <u>Erickson</u> patent is directed to a system for coordinating communications between a plurality of buyers and a plurality of suppliers and tracking responses communicated between the buyers and the suppliers. This system is used to facilitate a bidding process which will allow the exchange of information between the buyers and suppliers not only during the bidding process, but prior to the bidding process as well. A buyer is given the opportunity of viewing information

from one or more suppliers. After the buyer has elected a list of suppliers, the buyer creates and sends a "data cast" message that will be broadcast to the selected suppliers requesting a bid on desired goods or services. It is interesting to note that although a computerized system is envisioned, the system described in Erickson would also operate even suppliers do not have access to electronic communications. In this situation, messages can be sent between the buyer and the suppliers via facsimile or printed and mailed in an envelope. After all the information has been gathered and placed into a data cast object, the buyer can then analyze the information received. It is clear from a reading of the Erickson patent that its main thrust is to provide a system for tracking and facilitating the bid process. However, once such a bid process has been finalized, and the buyer makes a decision relating to the bid, the actual placement of an order is not contemplated by this system.

The present invention as indicated hereinabove, is directed to a system as well as a method of allowing a buyer to order goods from the Internet with information relating to various goods to be updated in a periodic basis.

Applicant has amended claim 15 to specifically indicate that the exchange platform is provided with a receiving means for receiving the inventory information at a first interval rate from vendors classified as search time participants, a second interval rate more frequent than the first interval rate from vendors classified as order time participants and at a third interval rate more frequent than the second interval rate from vendors classified as real time participants. It is believed that the Erickson reference does not suggest or anticipate such an exchange platform. Additionally, applicant has added claims 16 - 22 reciting a method for enabling a buyer to review the inventory provided by a plurality of vendors in which the inventory information is transmitted to an exchange platform at one of three interval rates. It is believed that these claims are also not anticipated or suggested by the Erickson patent.

Furthermore, claim 2 specifically recites a system in accordance with claim 15 including an ordering means allowing each buyer to order goods from the inventory of each vendor. This ordering means is clearly not contemplated by the <u>Erickson</u> patent.

Claims 6, 8-9 under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over the <u>Erickson</u> patent in view of official notice. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 6, 8 and 9 are directly or indirectly dependent on claim 15. It is believed that claim 15 recites patentable subject matter for the reason enunciated hereinabove. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance of these claims are earnestly solicited.

It is believed that this amendment places this application in condition for allowance. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

2. (Amended) The system in accordance with Claim 15 further including an ordering means allowing each of the buyers to order a particular stock item from the inventory of each vendor, through said exchange platform.

3. The system in accordance with Claim 2, further including a vendor viewing screen provided at each of the vendors for allowing each of the respective vendors to review orders placed by the buyer to that particular vendor, said orders including a list of pending, approved or rejected orders.

5. The system in accordance with Claim 3, wherein each buyer can request a target price of a particular stock through said exchange platform, said target price communicated to the particular vendor.

6. (Amended) The system in accordance with Claim 15, wherein said transmission means sends said inventory information in a batch file.

7. (Amended) The system in accordance with Claim 15, wherein each of the vendors is provided with a server and said transmission means automatically polls said server for inventory information.

8. The system in accordance with Claim 2, wherein said ordering means automatically informs the vendor when the buyer placed an order of a particular stock item in the vendor's inventory.

9. The system in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the ordering means holds said item for the buyer, preventing a second buyer from placing an order for said particular item.

10. The system in accordance with Claim 2, wherein said ordering means allows a buyer to request a targeted price for a particular stock item pending approval from the vendor.

11. The system in accordance with Claim 8, wherein said ordering means allows a buyer to request a targeted price for said particular stock item pending approval from the vendor.

12. The system in accordance with Claim 3, wherein a pending order can be modified by the vendor and returned to the buyer.

13. The system in accordance with Claim 3, wherein each of said pending orders must be approved during a predetermined time period, to prevent said pending order from becoming rejected.

14. The system in accordance with claim 11, wherein each of said pending orders must be approved during a predetermined time period, to prevent said pending order from becoming rejected.

15. (Amended) A system for enabling at least one buyer to review the inventory of [at least two] a plurality of vendors comprising:

[an exchange platform provided at a location remove from the buyer and the vendors, said exchange platform allowing vendors to be search time participants, order time participants or real time participants;

wherein inventory information from said search time participants is sent to said exchange platform at a first interval rate, inventory information from said order time participants is sent to said exchange platform at a second interval rate more frequent than said first interval rate, and inventory information from said real time participants is sent

to said exchange platform at a third interval rate more frequent than said second interval rate;]

        an exchange platform provided at a loc<sub>a</sub>tion removed from the buyer and the vendors, said exchange platform provided with a receiving means for receiving inventory information at a first interval rate from vendors classified as search time participants, said receiving means receiving inventory information at a second interval rate more frequent than said first interval rate from vendors classified as order time participants, said receiving means receiving inventory information at a third interval more frequent than said second interval rate from vendors classified as real time participants;

        transmission means for transmitting inventory information from said [vendors] search time participants, said order time participants and said real time participants to said exchange platforms; and

        reviewing means provided with each of the buyers for reviewing the inventory of each of the [vendors] said search time participants, said order time participants and said real time participants.